



# DRAWINGS

By

FREDERIC REMINGTON



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Franklin Kamm  
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## Concerning the Contents

SOME time ago I was spending a down-hill, happy forenoon among those shops where guns, and fishing tackle, and tents, and all the various necessities of a Western holiday are found. My time was crowded, and against the column of items on my list only a few checks had been made, when I reached "Groceries." Now, unless you have spent such foremornings and holidays yourself, the visit among the guns and fishing tackle may seem to raise questions of greater moment than any which could occur in the grocery shop. But this is not so. A man soon learns what weapons he prefers, and enters with his mind settled in advance; whereas, when it comes to evaporated vegetables, condensed soups, and powders that can expand into a meal, just pass over such novelties, and with divided purpose reluctantly choose and purchase until you are more than twice as much trouble than a woman. At last, such is my case, and having no mind to scandalize the forenoon, I had pencilled my supplies to avoid diversion and temptation. Even while I was dressing here I wished the pencils had mentioned that they were to be much jolted on the backs of horses, the shopman looked suddenly stern, and said this sounded like a stamping try. Yes, I told him in my defense, I was bound for the head waters of Wind River in Wyoming. Formally the merchant left from him, even trace of groceries left his expression, his eyes brimming with suspicion, and he asked in the voice of one who gives the countenance, "Have you ever been to Arizona?" and hearing that I had, "I used there under Crook!" he exclaimed. Then names of the North and the South came to his lips—San Carlos, San Joaquin, the Gila, the Chiricahuas, the Tonto Basin, the forks of the Owyhee, Boise, Bannock, Harsen—the spoke of many familiar to me, and next we were hard at it, this old soldier and myself, exchanging enthusiasm, grasping in enthusiasm among the dried prunes. Thus I wished because I could not spare, yet lost nothing by it, my pencils were put up right. And when the errand was finished, he wished me depart from the shop door, and sighed, "I should like to see it all again!"

Since that day I have gone back to him, not always to buy groceries, but just to mix the word, and thus, in the midst of my travels, to compare up Arizona, or Idaho, or Wyoming. My journeys through those regions have come after his time. I know none of his dangers and not many of his hardships. But I too have seen Sumner and Walker in the Rocky Mountains, and the sun rise, and have slept and marched on trails where he went once. Between us is established a kinship; both of us have been out there, both of us understand. It matters not that one was an enlisted man campaigning against Indians, while the other is nothing but a voluntary pilgrim to the wilderness. Upon both alike lies the wilderness set its spell. Yes, we certainly understand.

And what is this spell? Scarcely danger, for I have met no dangers worthy of the name. Scarcely freedom, since the enlisted man can do but as means what he pleases. Scarcely the sombre bit and party of that great art, which I had, indeed, but to which I can not remember hearing any master allude. Neither will the splendor of Nature captivate it, the inspiring vision, the invigoration of the spirit, the swelling oceans of color, rich, subtle, evanescent, the most ineffable as the most charged. Only the pilgrim values those things. The chance for riches it certainly is not; nor the chance for crime. Crime and Fortune are there as everywhere; but the last pocketbook is returned when it would not be so easily, and you meet with few that are troubling about dollars. Bloody and sudden as death often is there, it is not the planned murder so much as the quick blow of personal vengeance, the primitive man dealing with his fellow as in justice he expects his fellow will deal with him. Finally, it is not adventure alone. Though roving spirits have come to that over the plains, and with Indians and cattle driving have let loose the formal energy no town gave room for, denizens shrank there too, many disasters, and found happiness. In all of this I am speaking of the wilderness as it was once, and almost is no more. But you will hold the dreamer still, now and then, riding alone from horizon to horizon, paddling upon unspanned rivers, leaping in quiet cataracts, all of them escaped from social codes, respecting the reverent and paying the penalty in that ardent silence. Far indeed the silence of that world seems to have come unbroken from behind Genesis, to have been either than the beginning, or like one with the planets, to have known no motion, that dwelleth Remote to a show. The little sounds of earth do not break it. In it the painted Indian walks naked, the raven of his mystery. In it you can walk or sleep, and no man leaders. Whatever low there is, rises from the ground or falls from the star. For the very living, life seems to mingle with the origin before the first has measured its span. That is the spell for trooper or for pilgrim. Faster empire to empire, our wise brains have devised conventions that we may live together, but our unwise hearts crave the something that wisdom has renounced for us. Be most of these you will meet in the wilderness, be they drivers or dreamers, have followed the heart's desire and escaped back to Nature.

Ah, there is a loss also in the West! It has dragged away that have never returned. But if you wisely turn yourself from it and enter the fold of

civilization, and in insatiable content will generate, for instance, your heart will remind you of *out there*, now and then, a word like *Oxshoe* or *Wind River* will give you a homesickness for the sunburst magic of the place.

Those happy ones who have known it *out there* in that necessary which set the soldier and me talking like old acquaintances. And therefore I am going to show him these drawings, for every one will speak so lame of *out there*. He will rejoice in their truth—indeed truth is a pale word—it is the vibrating thing itself which seems to rise out of these pages. Even to me they flush and throb with life I have lived, and how much more in a man whose years preceded mine and who had dangers where I had none!

I have stood before many paintings of the West. Paintings of mountain, paintings of buffalo, paintings of Indians—the whole mystic and heroic pageant of our American soil; the only greatly remains, during our generation has known, the last greatly romantic thing our Continent holds, indeed the poetic episode most deeply native that we possess. Long before my eyes looked upon its beautiful domain, I studied the paintings, but when Remington came with only a pencil, I forgot the rest! And now I have seen for myself, and know how he has caught also not only the repeat call, or the steep crook seeking his comfortable corn cob, the day-by-day task of the wilderness, but the eternal note also, the gay and the awe of that epic life. He has made them visible by his art, and set them down as a national treasure. Look at the *Pony War Dancer*. That wild fury of religion, that splendor of avenging clothes down to us from the Stone Age. If you will open the Old Testament where Joshua delayed the course of the sun, or they blew down a city wall with a trumpet, you will come upon the same spirit. Look at the Medicine-men and the lightning. Again man's untamed original contact with a God of vengeance and terror. Is it not like Elijah and the fire-strike from heaven upon the altar? Then turn to the Shepherd's breakfast. Unless you have known that solitude, no words of mine can tell you how Remington has been a poet here. With some lines and washes on paper he has expressed that long memory of the wilderness. He has taken a rugged vagrant with a frying pan and connected him with the exord. The dog, the pack-mule, the ate, the dim sheep in the plain, those tender outlines of blots and ridge—it is Homer or the Old Testament again; none and the present world have no part here!

Perhaps you do not value all that as I do. Perhaps the snappy side suits you from the rest, and you shrink from the brutality of man and the suffering of beast. I have heard people speak that sometimes, and give thanks for their books, and their bathrooms, for the open, and for Europe where they can travel in a landscape seasoned by history. Well, Europe is richer, much richer, than any desert, and it is covered in use and comprehension, as the whole, that our smuggling forces are set. Our fond, quirk-ridden Republic looks, after all, toward the old world for its teaching. But we have a landscape seasoned by mystery, where flesh and heroes move, fit subjects for the poet. If you do not see this, perhaps you are too near. Let me ask you to think of the Moody slaughter in Homes, and of all the great art you know from him in the present day, his not the terrible in share of notoriety! Doubtless you would have stopped Homer's meeting in you how bodies were hacked to pieces beneath the walls of Troy, and how swinish were sometimes the companions of Ulysses. But now you read it all with pleasure. Do you believe Art would have amounted to much if it had excluded pain and ugliness and narrowed its gaze upon the Beautiful alone?

At any rate I am glad that we have Remington, one of the kind that makes us aware of things we could not have seen for ourselves. We have been scarce enough in native material for Art to let go what the soil provides us. We have often failed to value what the unligated foregoes wrote upon at ease. And I think as the Frontier recedes into tradition, fewer of us will drink from its depths. If Remington did nothing farther, already has he achieved. He has made a page of America's history his own,

OWEN WISTER.

# DRAWINGS





Tonithu's Fight on the Republican River, 1868—The Charge of Roman Nose





C. 1908. March 1908.





The Wren Man and the Medicine Man





Hunting a Beaver 1890—1891





Mr. George Weller









White Horn Hunter on Horse





YANKEE COUNTRY





On the Northern Plains





The Sheep Herder's Meal





The Gold Pile





Authorised Station - Indians Coming in with the Drags





The Well in the Desert





(C) Leader(s) of the Other Tribe





Herd





A Conestoga Train





THE CAMP





The Custer Hunt





The Young Sioux

Frederick Remington





Hua Derni Song





Rescuing a Stage Train





The Water in Arizona

Detailed Map 2





Landscape in Nevada—Twilight.





A. L. Smith





Y. HIRAIKA 1976 3209-2









Bronc Riding the G. Jones





Sharing the demands of Justice - The Head





Sketch Book Notes





114. Pioneros





Roping Herd on the Run





The Horse Virgin Breaking a Town





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A. Ranson Kinder





Riding the Range—Morning





A Sioux Indian on the Warpath.





Nor Penn, Sojourner





A Chincoteague Warpon





Un guerre





A Captain of Infantry in Field-Rag





A. Wind Jumper





CHINESE CARAVAN





Half-Breed Indians, Herdsmen of the Rockies





S. Medail





Over the Top of Hills





1992.1.8.2





Trouser. Herding Calf





1000 Pounds





The Girdle Tack with Way





A U.S. Cavalry Camp





Frederic Remington





High Director at the Cross Roads





Sioux Sioux Men





The Trail Rider





The Square Team





U.S. Dragoon 47









L. S. Carter: *Cavalry on Campaign*.





A Reservation Indian





Solaris





Fredrik Reuterholm

The Swedish plow





